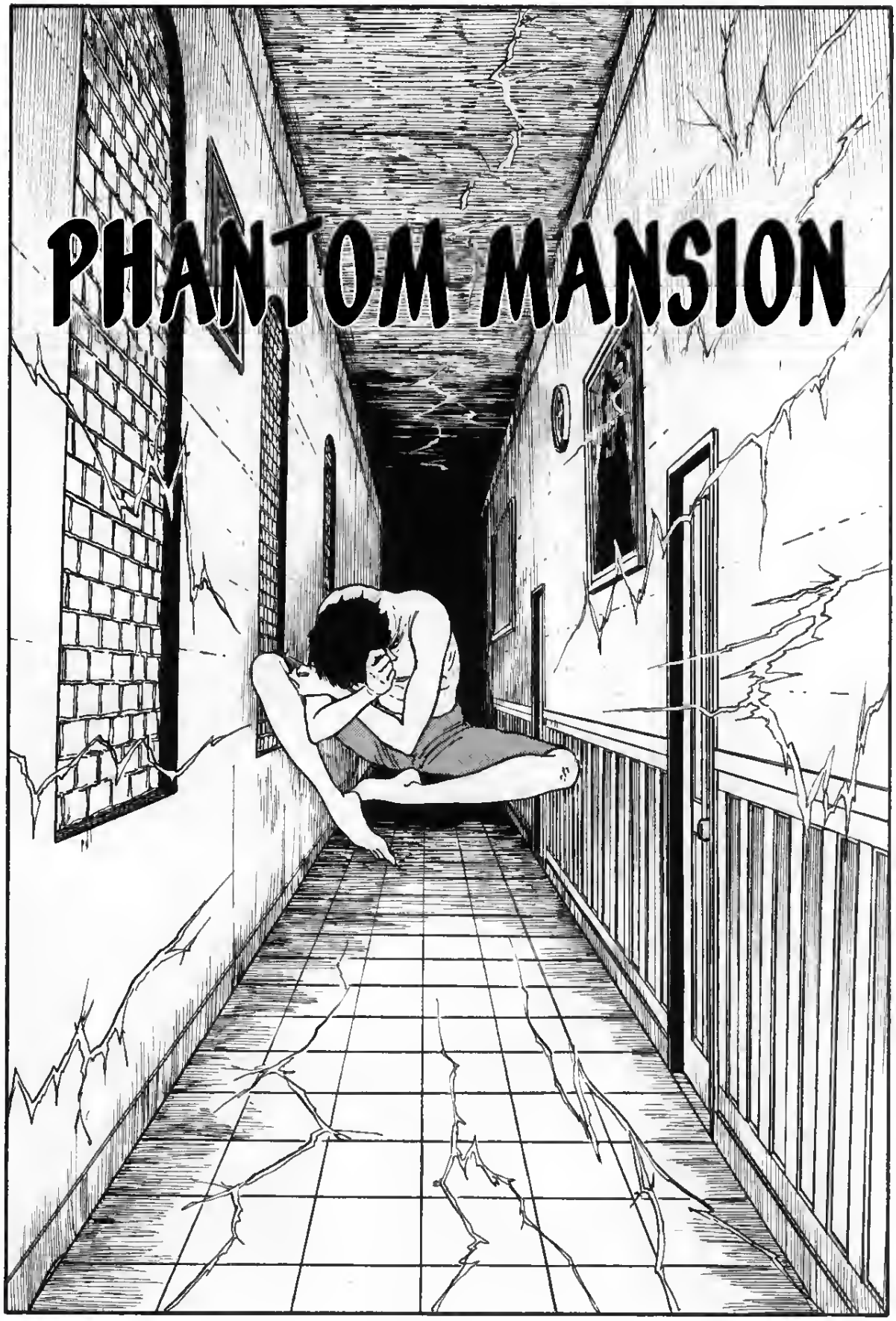

PHANTOM MANSION

I'D BEEN UNEMPLOYED, SO WHEN I HEARD ABOUT A LIVE-IN JOB I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE.
THEY DIDN'T REALLY SAY WHAT THE JOB ENTAILED. BUT THE WAGES WERE GOOD.
THE WINDOWS OF THE GLOOMY MANSION WERE ALL BRICKED UP.
AND THE FRONT DOOR WAS MADE OF SOLID IRON.

I'M KAMISHIRO, THE OWNER OF THIS HOUSE.
KOSEKI-KUN, ISN'T IT? THANK YOU FOR COMING.
HUH...? OH... YES...
GET INSIDE, QUICK-LY!
HELLO ... I'LL BE WORKING HERE FROM TODAY...
AND SO IT WAS NECESSARY TO BRICK UP ALL OF THE WINDOWS.
... THE TRUTH IS, MY ONLY SON IS ILL,
ALL OF THE WINDOWS IN THIS HOUSE ARE BRICKED UP.
IT'S DARK IN HERE, SO WATCH YOUR STEP.
IS SUNLIGHT BAD FOR HIS HEALTH?
RIGHT ...
NO ...

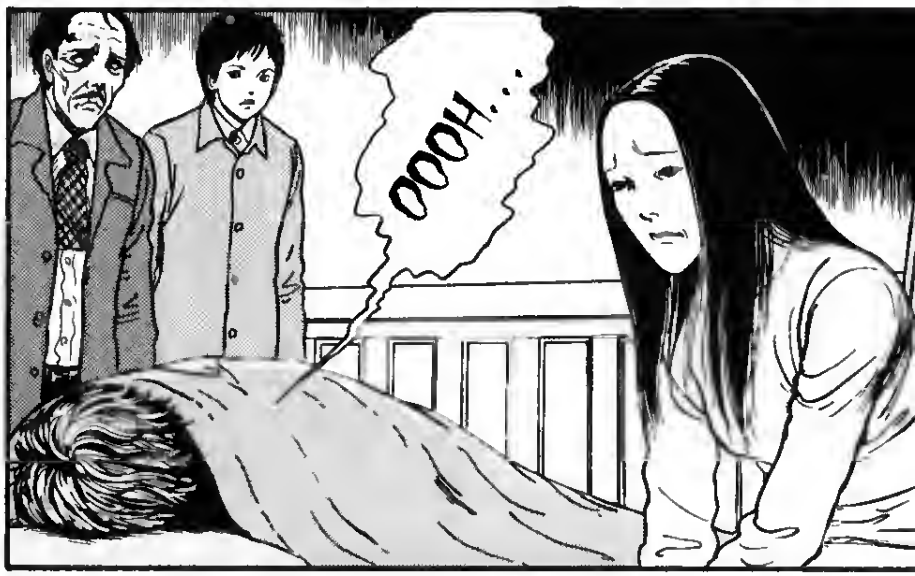
I'LL SHOW YOU TO MY SON'S ROOM.
ANYWAY ...
I'M SORRY !!
YOU ... BE CARE-FUL!!
OH...! ARE YOU OKAY?!
HE'S AN EMPLOYEE, LIKE YOU. I CUR-RENTLY HAVE FIVE EMPLOYEES, BUT IT'S STILL NOT ENOUGH.
WHO WAS THAT?
FINE. GET ON WITH IT.
... WELL, I'M IN A HURRY, SO ...

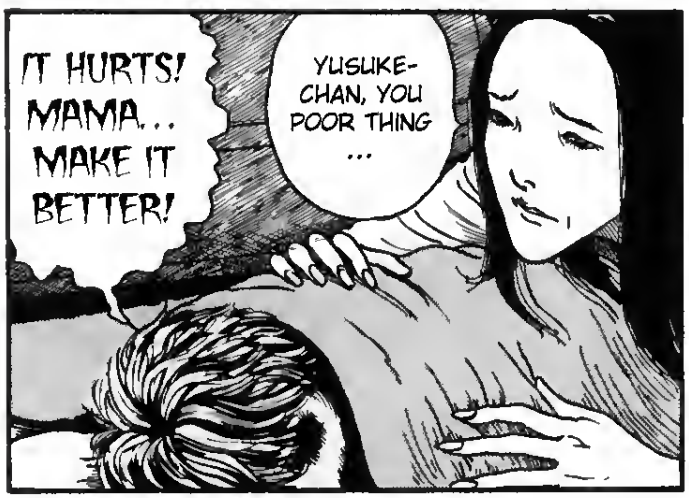
THIS IS MY SON'S ROOM.
NOT COM-PARED TO THE PAIN MY SON FEELS.
AN INJURY LIKE THIS IS NOTHING ...
HUH? ... YEAH.
ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'RE BLEEDING.
THIS IS MY WIFE AND MY SON.

HE'S THE TEAM LEADER OF MY EMPLOY-EES.
AND THIS IS MIZUNO-KUN.

HE'S WORK-ING.
WHAT IS HE ...

OOOOH
OOOH...


OOOH...

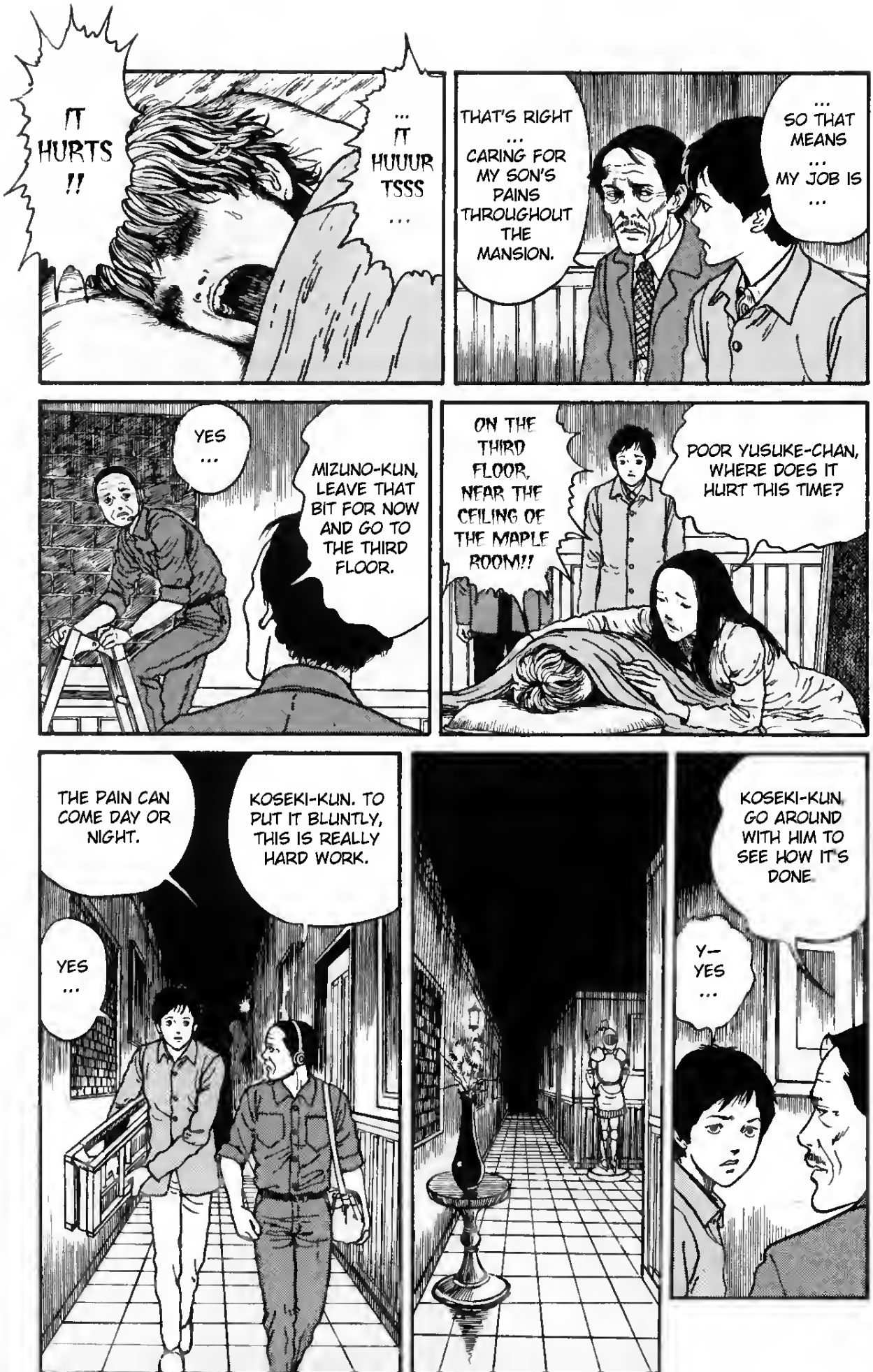

IT HURTS! MAMA... MAKE IT BETTER!
YUSUKE-CHAN, YOU POOR THING ...

IT HURTS SO BAD!
IT HURTS, IT HURTS!

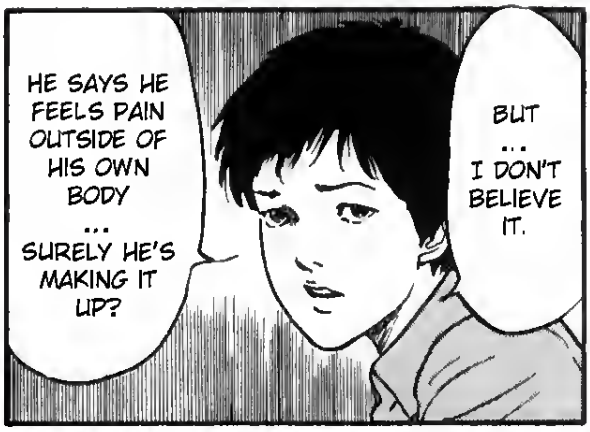
WHERE DOES IT HURT?
HERE?
I'LL RUB IT BETTER FOR YOU ...
YEAH
BY HERE?
TO THE RIGHT ...
HOW'S THIS? DO YOU FEEL A BIT BETTER? ...
... NOT YET.

HE IS REALLY IN PAIN
...
IN VERY UNLIKELY PLACES
...
...
MY SON FEELS PAIN ALL OVER THE PLACE.
ARE YOU SHOCKED, KOSEKI-KUN?
HOWEVER, MY SON HASN'T LOST ANY LIMBS. HE FEELS PAIN IN PLACES THAT ARE COMPLETELY UNRELATED TO HIS BODY.
PHANTOM PAIN SYNDROME IS WHEN YOU FEEL PAIN IN A LIMB THAT YOU HAD AMPUTATED, OR THAT YOU LOST IN AN ACCIDENT.
THE WAY THAT HE FEELS PAIN IN IMPOSSIBLE PLACES IS SIMILAR TO "PHANTOM PAIN SYNDROME"
PERHAPS IT'S A DELUSION, CAUSED BY HIS EXTREME FEAR OF PAIN
...
BUT
...
IT'S TRUE THAT MY SON HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNUSUALLY SENSITIVE TO PAIN.
THE ONLY THING THE DOCTOR WILL TELL US IS THAT IT'S A PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM.

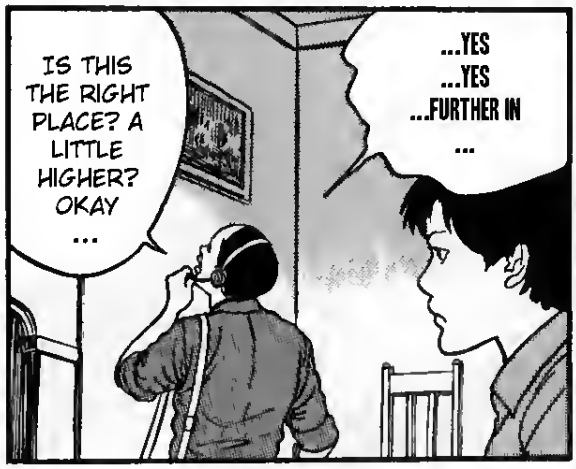
WHERE DOES IT HURT?
TELL ME EXACTLY WHERE I SHOULD GO.
HASHIMOTO HERE. I'M IN THE SAKURA ROOM IN THE NORTH WING OF THE FIRST FLOOR.
A LITTLE HIGHER.
... HERE?
MAKE IT BETTER, QUICKLY!!
CLOSE TO THE WALL ON THE LEFT ...
AT THE BEGINNING, ONLY THE SPACE DIRECTLY AROUND HIS BODY WAS AFFECTED.
THE WORRYING THING IS, MY SON'S PAIN IS GRADUALLY SPREADING FURTHER OUT.
KOSEKI-KUN.
TO TRY AND STOP THE PAIN FROM SPREADING OUTSIDE OF THE MANSION, WE'RE DESPERATELY BLOCKING UP ALL OF THE WINDOWS.
NOW HE FEELS PAIN THROUGHOUT THIS ENTIRE BUILDING.


IT HURTS !!
... IT HUUUR TSSS ...
THAT'S RIGHT ... CARING FOR MY SON'S PAINS THROUGHOUT THE MANSION.
... SO THAT MEANS ... MY JOB IS ...
YES ...
MIZUNO-KUN, LEAVE THAT BIT FOR NOW AND GO TO THE THIRD FLOOR.
ON THE THIRD FLOOR, NEAR THE CEILING OF THE MAPLE ROOM!!
POOR YUSUKE-CHAN, WHERE DOES IT HURT THIS TIME?
THE PAIN CAN COME DAY OR NIGHT.
KOSEKI-KUN. TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, THIS IS REALLY HARD WORK.
YES ...
KOSEKI-KUN, GO AROUND WITH HIM TO SEE HOW IT'S DONE.
Y— YES ...

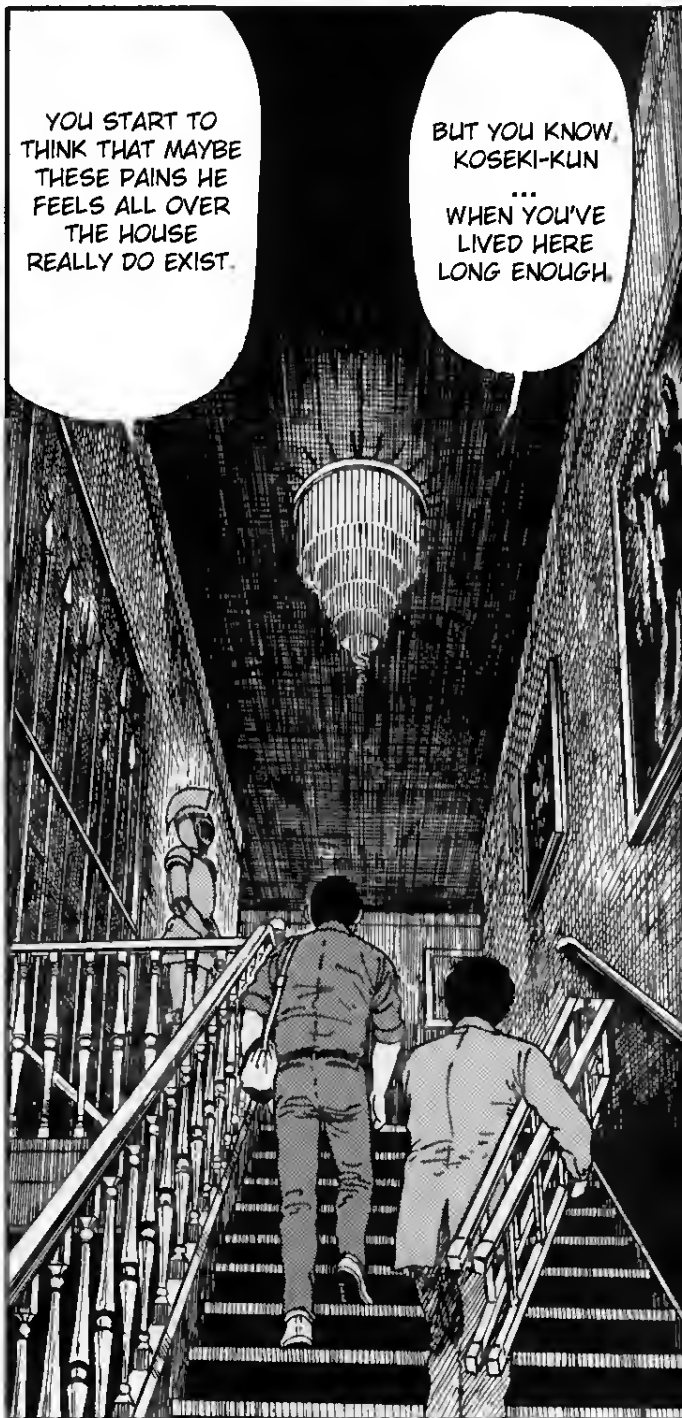
IF WE DO WHAT WE'RE TOLD THEN WE GET PAID.
I AGREE WITH YOU THERE. BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.


HE SAYS HE FEELS PAIN OUTSIDE OF HIS OWN BODY ... SURELY HE'S MAKING IT UP?
BUT ... I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

TELL ME WHERE TO GO!!
YES. WE'VE JUST ARRIVED AT MAPLE ROOM.


IS THIS THE RIGHT PLACE? A LITTLE HIGHER? OKAY ...
...YES ...YES ...FURTHER IN ...

I'LL NEED YOUR HELP, KOSEKI-KUN.
THE PAIN IS COVERING A WIDE AREA THIS TIME.

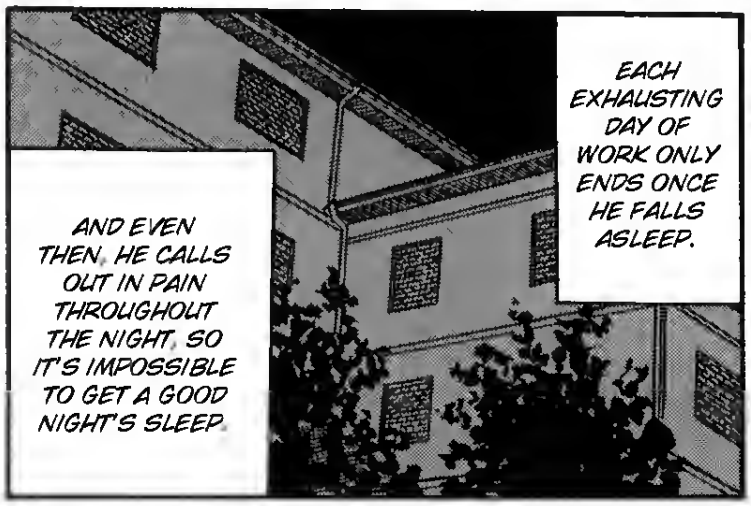

YOU START TO THINK THAT MAYBE THESE PAINS HE FEELS ALL OVER THE HOUSE REALLY DO EXIST.
BUT YOU KNOW, KOSEKI-KUN ... WHEN YOU'VE LIVED HERE LONG ENOUGH.

AM I DOING IT RIGHT?
...BY HERE? ...
RUB THAT BIT OVER THERE.
WOAH!
?!
CRASH
AAH!

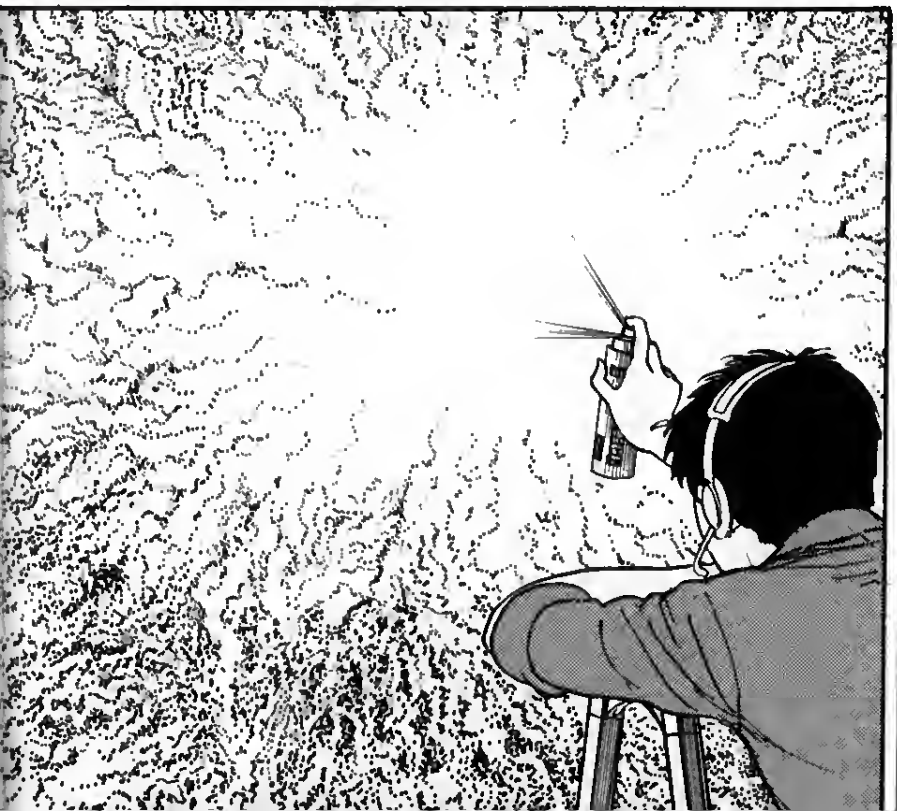
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, KOSEKI-KUN?!
OW!
OH... MIZUNO-SAN, YOU'RE BLEEDING ...
ARE YOU OKAY?!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
I'M SORRY! JUST NOW, I HAD ... A REALLY WEIRD FEELING ...
LET ME PATCH YOU UP.
IT'S FINE, I'LL DO IT MYSELF.
YOU'RE ALWAYS COVERED IN CUTS AND BRUISES WHEN YOU DO A JOB LIKE THIS. I GUESS I'M USED TO IT.
YEAH ... I'M FINE, IT DOESN'T HURT.

WE MASSAGE EMPTY SPACES AND SPRAY PAINKILLER AROUND.
DAY AFTER DAY WE RUN AROUND THE HOUSE, FOLLOWING THAT BOY'S DIREC-TIONS.

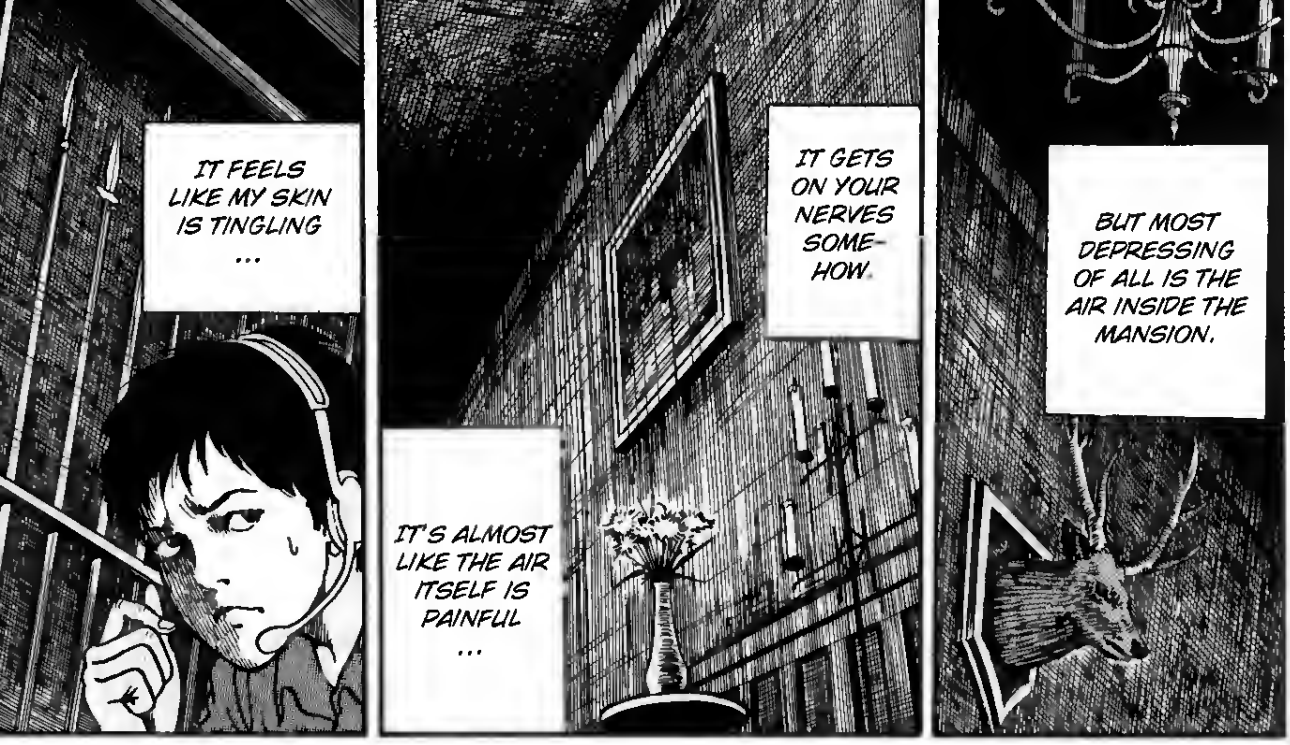
AND THAT'S HOW MY STRANGE LIFE IN THIS MANSION ALL BEGAN.

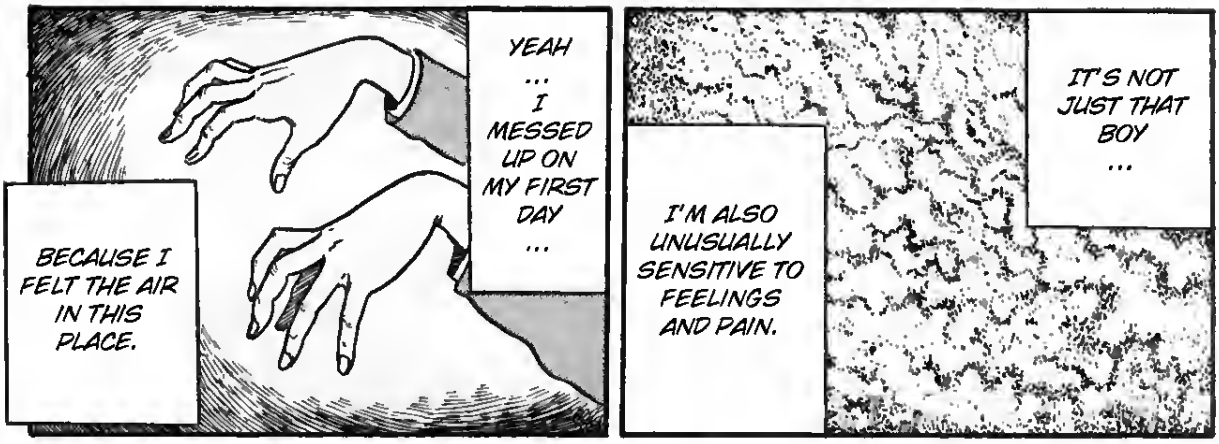

AND EVEN THEN, HE CALLS OUT IN PAIN THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT, SO IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.
EACH EXHAUSTING DAY OF WORK ONLY ENDS ONCE HE FALLS ASLEEP.

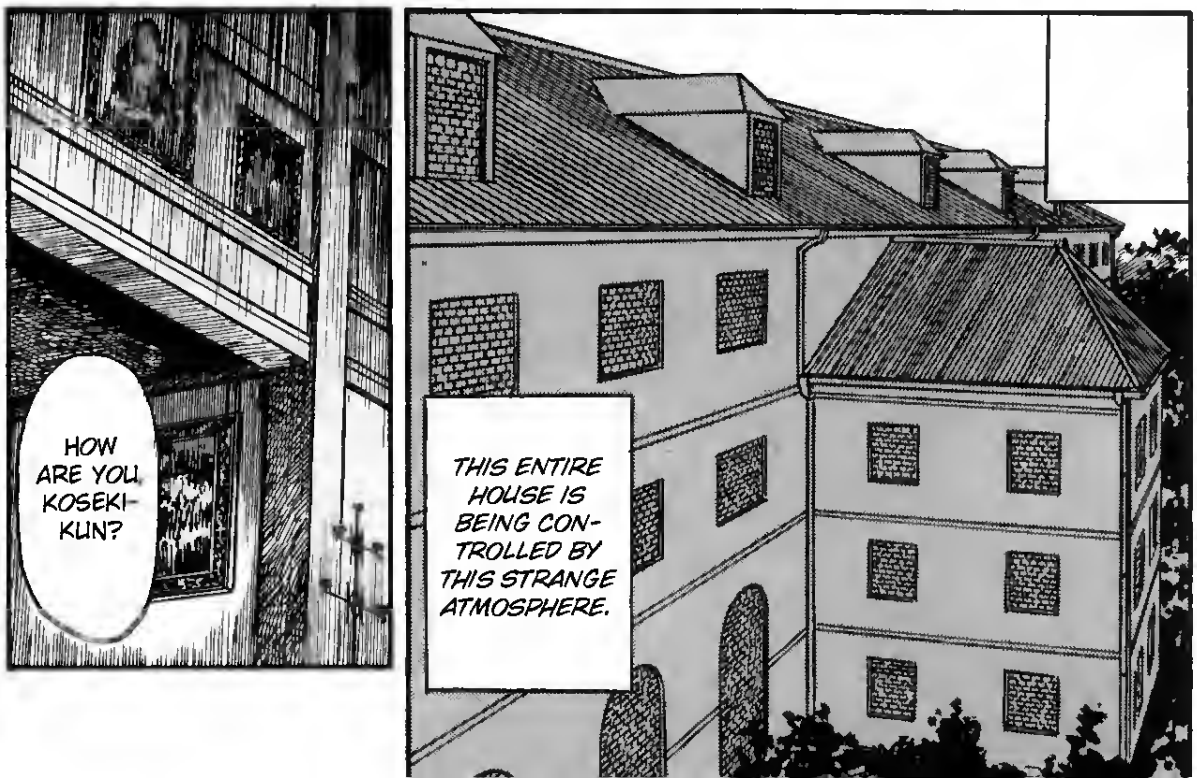
IT HUUURTS, IT HUUURTS ...
WE CAN ONLY EVER EASE THE BOY'S PAIN TEMPORARILY, SO IT'S AN ENDLESS TASK...



I'M SO TIRED ...
I'M TIRED, AND THIS IS SO POINTLESS ...


IT FEELS LIKE MY SKIN IS TINGLING ...
IT GETS ON YOUR NERVES SOME-HOW.
IT'S ALMOST LIKE THE AIR ITSELF IS PAINFUL ...
BUT MOST DEPRESSING OF ALL IS THE AIR INSIDE THE MANSION.


YEAH ... I MESSED UP ON MY FIRST DAY ...
BECAUSE I FELT THE AIR IN THIS PLACE.
IT'S NOT JUST THAT BOY ...
I'M ALSO UNUSUALLY SENSITIVE TO FEELINGS AND PAIN.

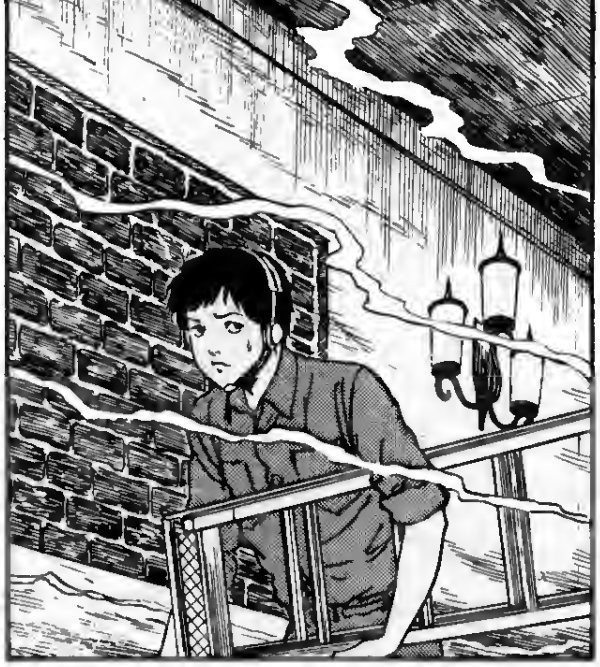

HOW ARE YOU, KOSEKI-KUN?
THIS ENTIRE HOUSE IS BEING CON-TROLLED BY THIS STRANGE ATMOSPHERE.

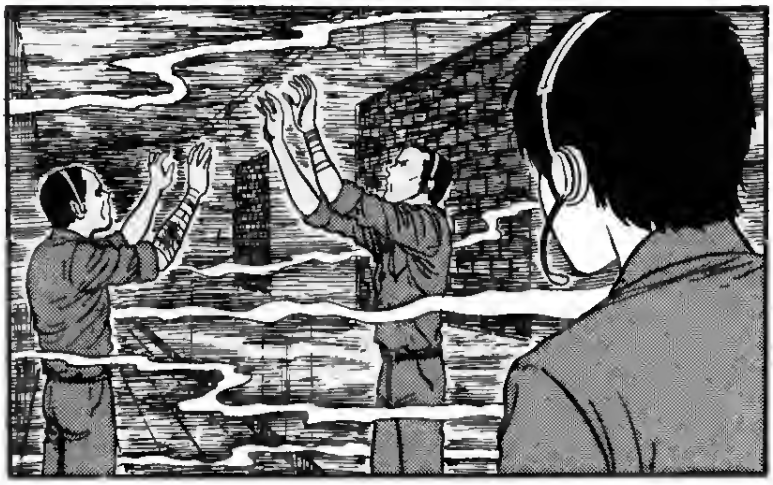
Y... YES.
I KNOW IT'S HARD WORK, BUT I APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE.
HAVE YOU GOTTEN USED TO YOUR JOB?
IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT FOR ME TO SELFISHLY SEE A DOCTOR WHILE MY SON IS SUFFERING.
YES, I'M FINE ...
THE INJURY ON YOUR FOREHEAD DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HEALING AT ALL.
... YOU DON'T LOOK WELL, SIR. ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
A FEW DAYS LATER, MY EMPLOYER PASSED AWAY.
HE DIED OF SEPTICAEMIA* ... HE'D LEFT THE WOUND ON HIS FOREHEAD UNTREATED, AND IT BECAME INFECTED.
*blood poisoning, especially that caused by bacteria or their toxins

OOOH.
ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT YOUR WAGES?
IT'S JUST THAT...
YES, OF COURSE ...
YOU'LL CONTINUE TO CARE FOR YUSUKE, WON'T YOU?
... I'LL HAND OVER ALL OF THE KAMISHIRO FAMILY FORTUNE!!
YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT ... I HAVE MONEY.
... AND IF THERE EVER SEEMS TO BE A PROBLEM WITH PAYMENT ...
... THAT'S RIGHT ... I'LL GIVE EVERYTHING I OWN TO WHOEVER STAYS HERE!

CREAK
IT HURTS INSIDE THE CLOSET IN THE PINE ROOM ON THE THIRD FLOOR.
IT HUUURTS ... IT HUUURTS.
OOOW!!
IT HURTS!!
OKAY ... WHERE EXACTLY ...
OW!
YEAH... YEAH... WELL, I GUESS I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LOW PAIN TOLERANCE,
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE I'M EVEN MORE SENSITIVE LATELY ...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, KOSEKI? STOP WHINING. YOU ONLY BUMPED YOUR HEAD.
IT HURTS!

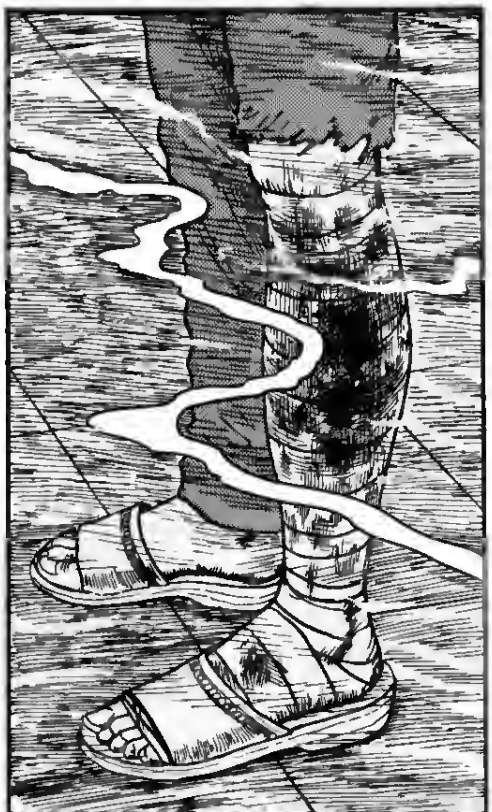
IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL.
SEE, EVEN A WOUND LIKE THIS.
THE REST OF US, ME INCLUDED, HARDLY FEEL ANY PAIN.
YOU'RE WEIRD.
WHY DID YOU LET IT GET LIKE THAT?!
HASHIMOTO-SAN ... THAT WOUND IS INFECTED!
MAYBE THAT KID IS FEELING OUR PAIN FOR US?
IT'S STRANGE THOUGH, ISN'T IT ... I WONDER WHY IT DOESN'T HURT ...
THE OTHER GUYS ARE ALL THE SAME, TOO ... YOU SHOULD SEE MIZUNO'S ARM.
HUH? ... OH, I KNOW THAT. BUT IT DOESN'T HURT.
HASHIMOTO-SAN ... YOU CAN'T LEAVE IT ANY LONGER, IT'S DANGEROUS!
I KNOW.



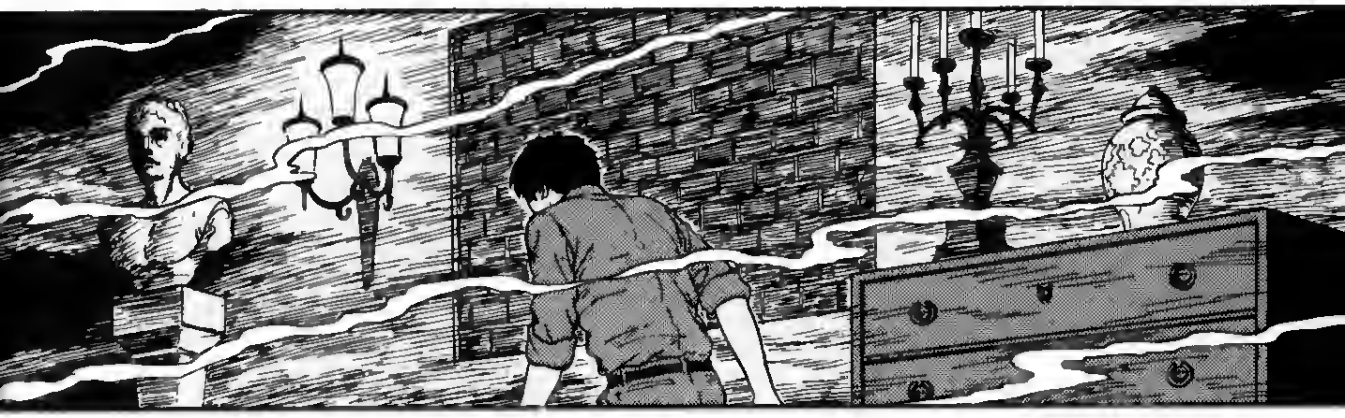


...
THIS PLACE SMELLS BAD LATELY
...

THE SOURCE OF THE SMELL WAS OBVIOUS.
THEIR WOUNDS ARE BECOMING SERIOUSLY INFECTED
...

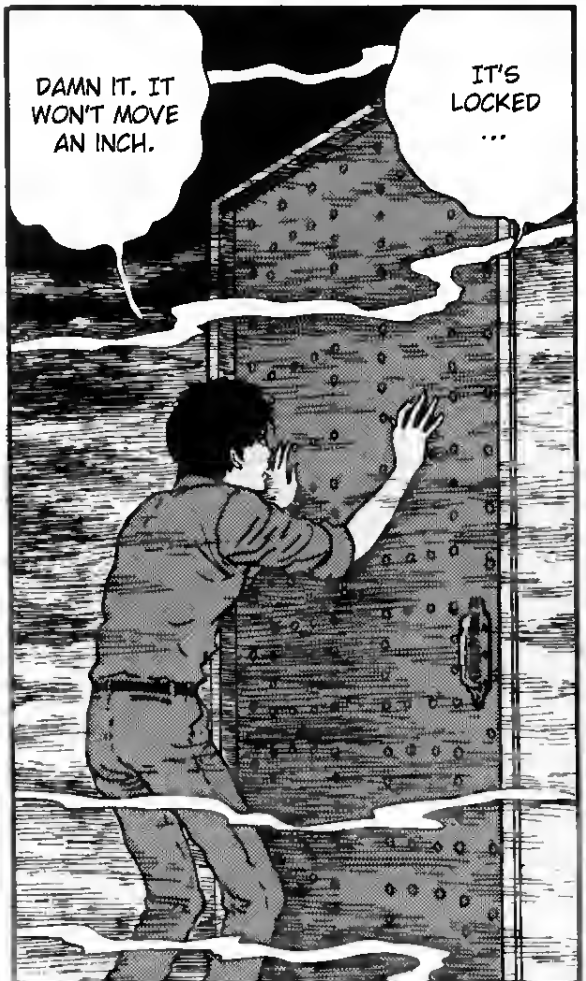


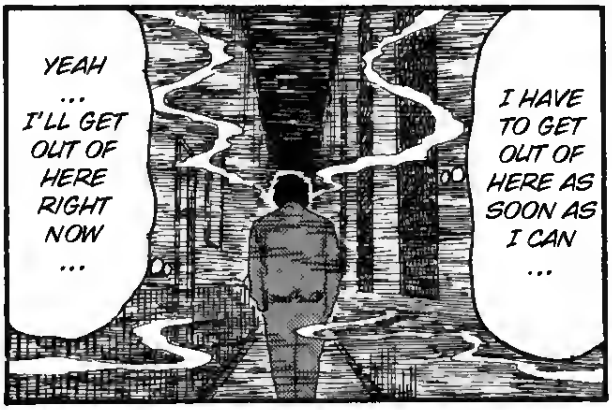
I KNOW I'VE TOLD YOU OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
BUT YOU ALL NEED TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL.
WE'RE FINE ... BESIDES, IF WE LEAVE NOW, WHO'LL LOOK AFTER THE BOY?
HE'S RIGHT. ARE YOU SAYING THAT IF WE WENT TO THE HOSPITAL, YOU COULD DO ALL THIS BY YOURSELF?!
HUH? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?!
N... NO, SHIMADA-SAN ...
I JUST ...
IT HUUURTS!
IT HUUURTS!
COULDN'T YOU TRY TELLING THEM, MA'AM?
AT THIS RATE, THEY'LL ALL END UP LIKE YOUR HUSBAND ...
... BUT WHAT ABOUT YUSUKE? IF THEY ALL HAVE TO STAY IN HOSPITAL,
WHO'S GOING TO LOOK AFTER YUSUKE?

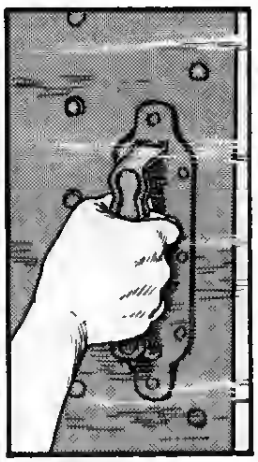


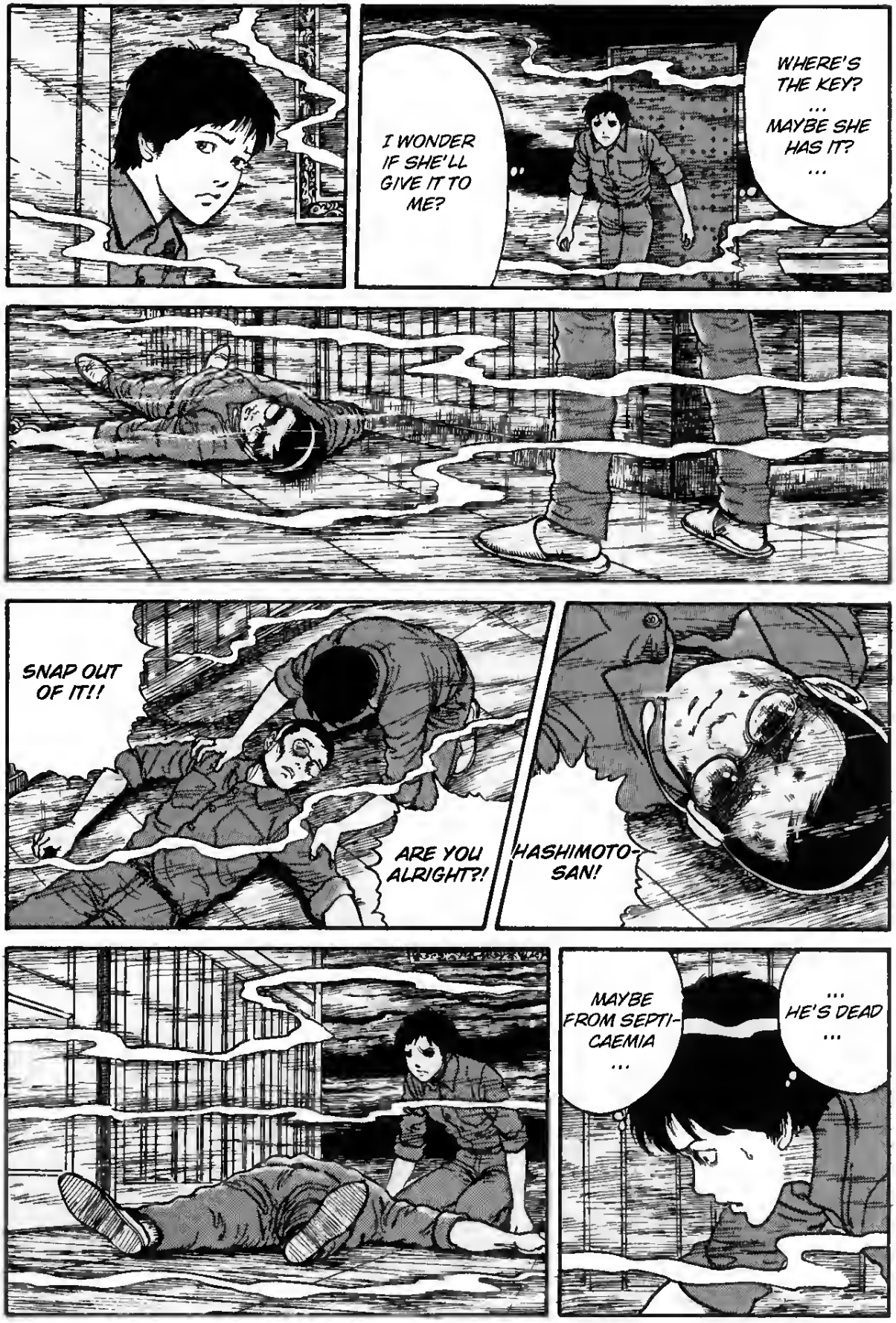
IT'S FROM BEING IN THIS MANSION ...
EVEN THE AIR STINGS ...

SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH ME, TOO ... I'M HURTING ALL OVER FROM THE TINIEST OF INJURIES ...
... I GUESS I SHOULDN'T BE WORRYING ABOUT THE OTHERS ...


DAMN IT. IT WON'T MOVE AN INCH.
IT'S LOCKED ...


YEAH ... I'LL GET OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW ...
I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE AS SOON AS I CAN ...



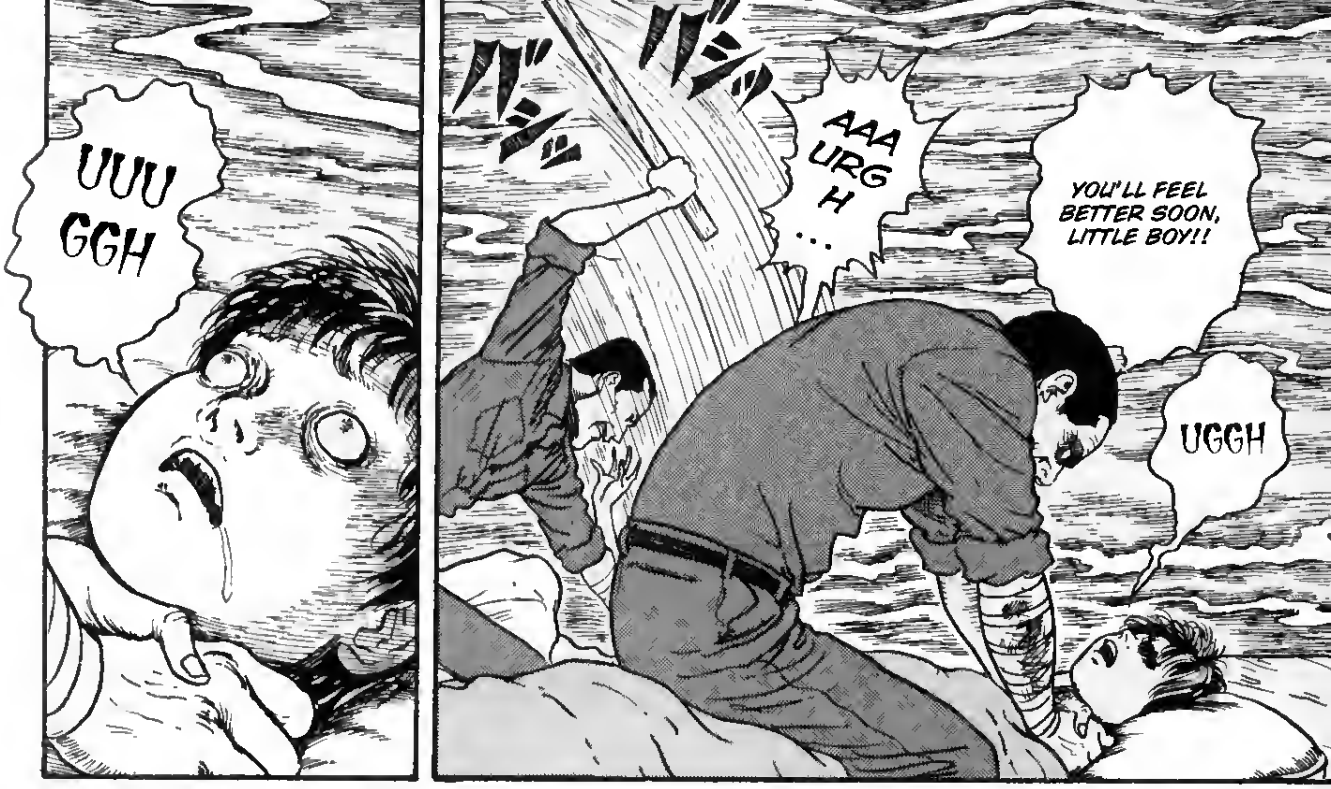

I WONDER IF SHE'LL GIVE IT TO ME?
WHERE'S THE KEY? ... MAYBE SHE HAS IT? ...
SNAP OUT OF IT!!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?!
HASHIMOTO-SAN!
MAYBE FROM SEPTI-CAEMIA ...
... HE'S DEAD ...

WHAT?!
MIZUNO-SAN, THIS IS REALLY BAD! SUGANUMA AND YAMASHITA HAVE COLLAPSED! THEY LOOK LIKE THEY MIGHT DIE ANY MINUTE!
WHAT ... HASHIMOTO IS DEAD?
HEY, KOSEKI... WHAT ARE YOU GETTING SO WORKED UP ABOUT? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE...
HMMM..
IF IT CARRIES ON LIKE THIS, YOU'LL DIE TOO!
I TOLD YOU THIS WOULD HAPPEN! IF YOU GO TO THE HOSPITAL RIGHT NOW IT WON'T BE TOO LATE!
TH... THAT'S NOT TRUE!
YOU'RE WRONG!
AAH ... I GET IT. THAT WAY YOU CAN KEEP THE FORTUNE ALL FOR YOURSELF.
ARE YOU REALLY THAT DESPERATE FOR US TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL?

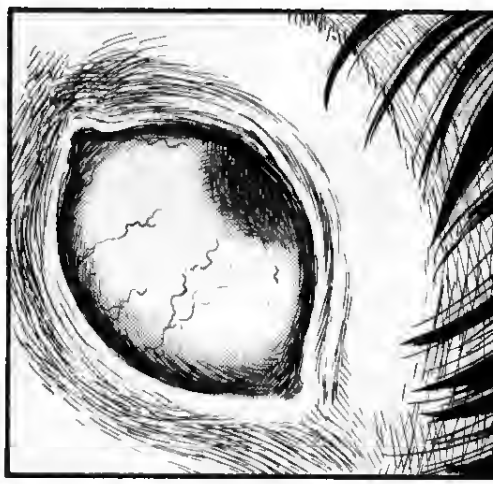
GASP
YEAH ...
BUT YAMASHITA STOPPED MOVING ...
SUGANUMA-SAN, ARE YOU ALRIGHT?!
I'LL CALL AN AMBULANCE RIGHT AWAY!
HANG IN THERE!
NO! I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO USE THE PHONE!!

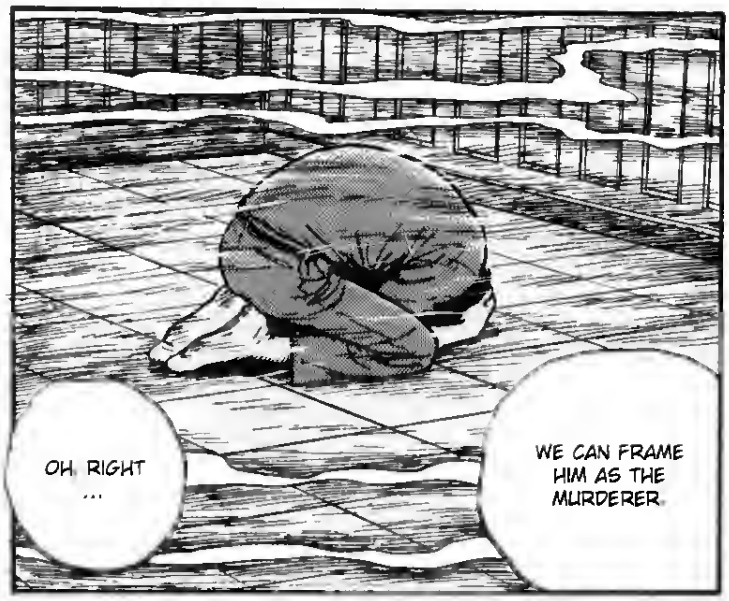
WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM WITHOUT YOU ALL HERE TO LOOK AFTER HIM?!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?! LOOK HOW YUSUKE IS SUFFERING!
IT HUUURTS, IT HUUURTS
W ... WHY?!
I'M CERTAINLY NOT GIVING YOU THE KEY, EITHER ...
I'M USING YOUR TELE-PHONE.
... THERE'S NO USE TALKING TO YOU.
PLEASE, DON'T ABANDON YUSUKE ...
PLEASE ...
D... DO YOU REALLY THINK NOW'S A GOOD TIME FOR THIS?!
ガ
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?!
Y... YOU DID WHAT?!
... HEH. THERE'S NO POINT. I'VE CUT THE PHONE LINES.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
AAARGH!
ISN'T IT KINDER TO PUT HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY?
IT'S TIME FOR YOU AND THE BOY TO DIE.
WE'LL TAKE YOUR FORTUNE IMMEDIATELY.
MA'AM ... THIS IS ALL TOO MUCH BOTHER.
AAAH!
S... STOP IT! DON'T KILL MY SON ...

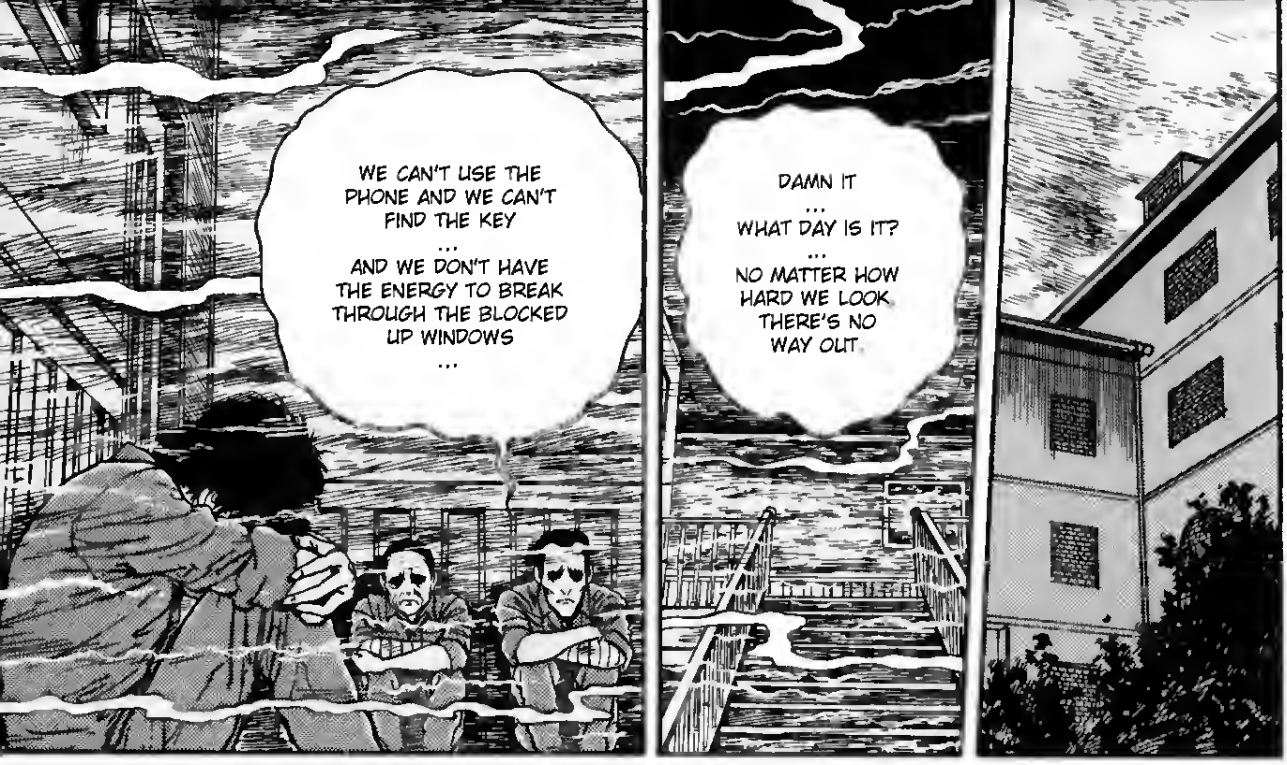

UUU GGH
バッ
バッ
AAA URG H ...
YOU'LL FEEL BETTER SOON, LITTLE BOY!!
UGGH

GASP GASP ... WE'VE FINALLY DONE IT.

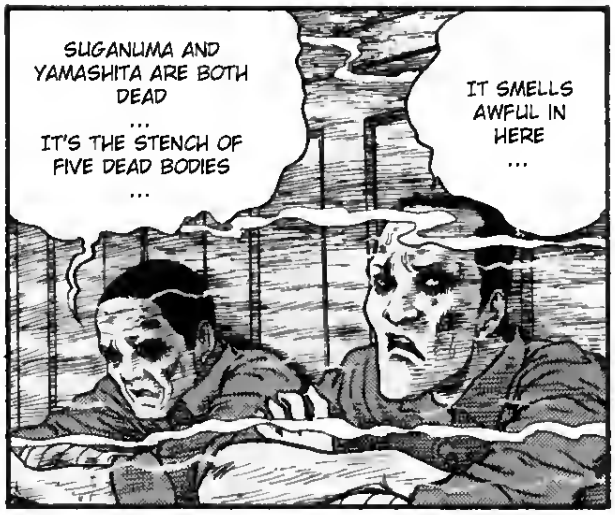


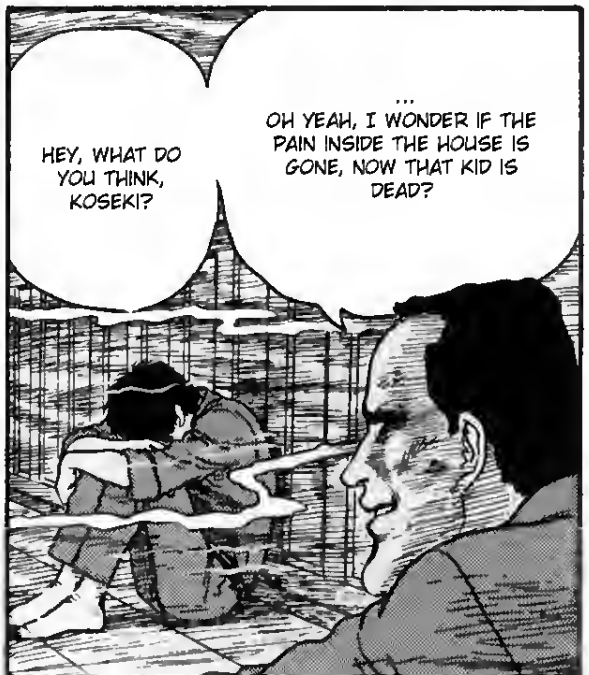

OH, RIGHT ...
WE CAN FRAME HIM AS THE MURDERER.

HMMM ... LET'S KEEP HIM ALIVE FOR NOW ...
MIZUNO-SAN ... WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT KOSEKI?

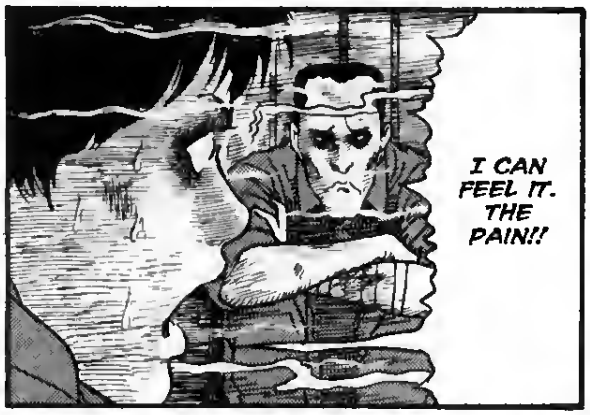

WE CAN'T USE THE PHONE AND WE CAN'T FIND THE KEY
...
AND WE DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY TO BREAK THROUGH THE BLOCKED UP WINDOWS
...
DAMN IT
...
WHAT DAY IS IT?
...
NO MATTER HOW HARD WE LOOK THERE'S NO WAY OUT.

IT'S AMAZING THAT WE'RE STILL ALIVE
...
WE STINK TOO
...

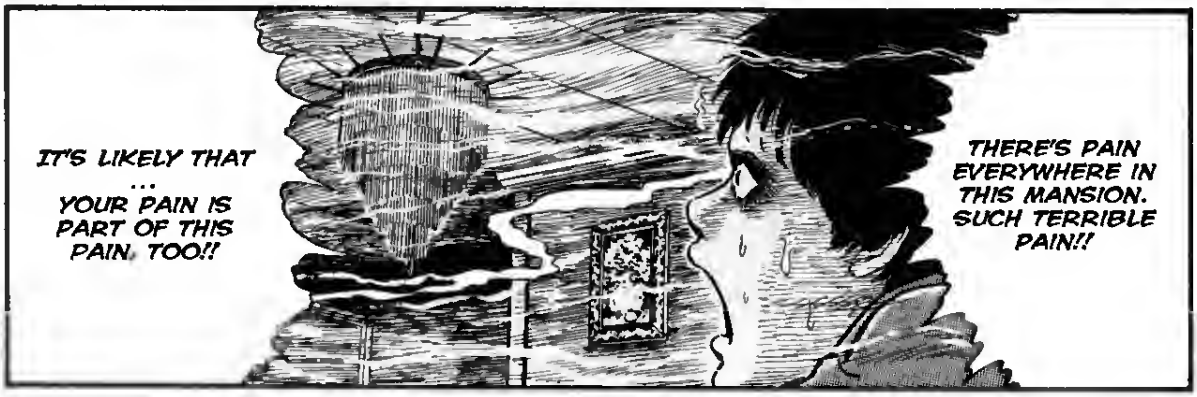

SUGANUMA AND YAMASHITA ARE BOTH DEAD
...
IT'S THE STENCH OF FIVE DEAD BODIES
...
IT SMELLS AWFUL IN HERE
...

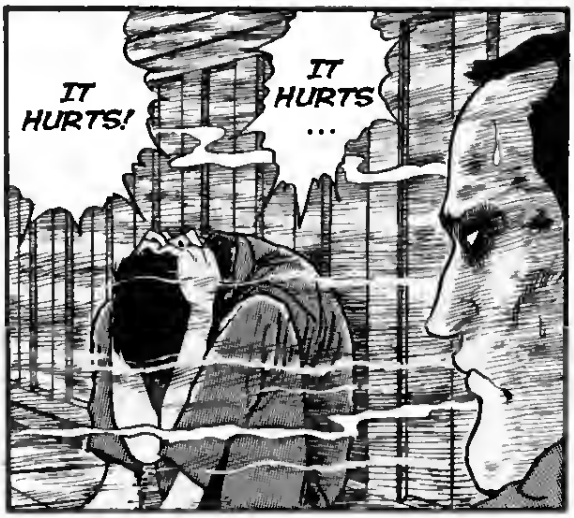

HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK, KOSEKI?
...
OH YEAH, I WONDER IF THE PAIN INSIDE THE HOUSE IS GONE, NOW THAT KID IS DEAD?

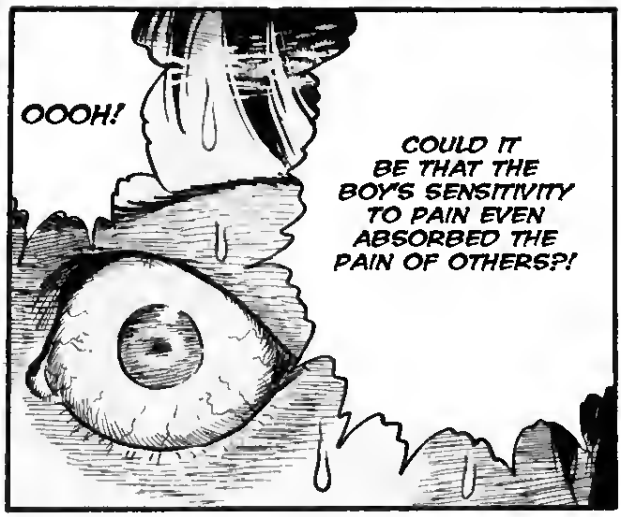
HE MAY BE DEAD, BUT HIS PAIN WAS LEFT BEHIND
...
IT'S JUST LIKE A "PHANTOM PAIN"
...
YOU'RE WRONG
...
THAT BOY'S PAIN IS STILL HERE.


I CAN FEEL IT. THE PAIN!!

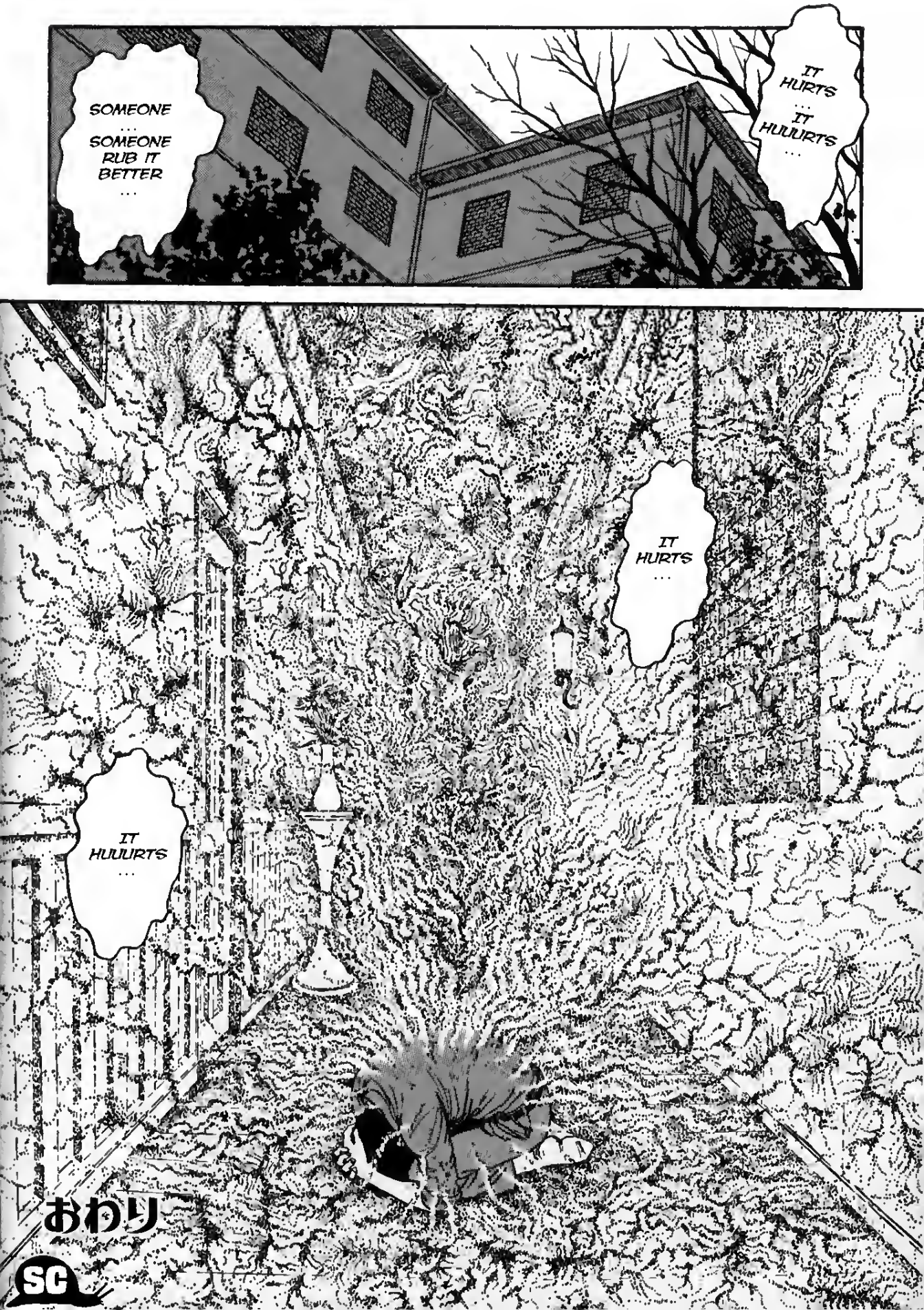
HMPH
...
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?


IT'S LIKELY THAT
...
YOUR PAIN IS PART OF THIS PAIN, TOO!!
THERE'S PAIN EVERYWHERE IN THIS MANSION. SUCH TERRIBLE PAIN!!


IT HURTS!
IT HURTS
...


OOOH!
COULD IT BE THAT THE BOY'S SENSITIVITY TO PAIN EVEN ABSORBED THE PAIN OF OTHERS?!

MIZUNO-SAN ...
...
MIZUNO-SAN ... KOSEKI IS ...
... GETTING CRAZIER AND CRAZIER ...
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, LITTLE BOY.
IS THERE ANY GREATER HAPPINESS?
HE DIDN'T SUFFER AT ALL.
HEHEHE ... WHAT A PEACEFUL DEATH ...
GONNA ...
NOT ...
BUT ... I'M ... DEFINITELY ...
DIE
ドサッ


SOMEONE ... SOMEONE RUB IT BETTER ...
IT HURTS ... IT HUUURTS ...
IT HURTS ...
IT HUUURTS ...
おわり
SC

PHANTOM MANSION

STORY AND ART BY
JUNJI ITOU

ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION PRESENTED BY
SLUG CHICKS

TRANSLATOR - SALIMALI
CLEANER - SEANIEBOY
TYPESETTER - OTAKUCHARM

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